

IN FOCUS

The Official Publication of the Jamaican Canadian Association

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Special Edition August 2006

Tenky Miss Lou, Our Treasure



The Honourable Louise Bennett-Coverley, OM, OJ, MBE, DLitt

By Neil Armstrong

“Bibbs, if they offer to pay you nothing, just allow them to publish what you write” – this was the advice Miss Lou received from her mother when The Gleaner Company approached her to write her verses for *The Sunday Gleaner* in the 1940s. The verses be-

came very popular and her career took off but there were detractors. “Certain people were writing to the paper saying people will never be able to speak properly again, yuh know, and all kind of foolishness like that,” said Miss Lou in a radio interview with this writer in 2001. She recalls someone saying she wouldn’t

go further than Port Royal in her career. Now she is recognized internationally. Miss Lou received her first professional fee from her late husband, Eric “Chalk Talk” Coverley at a Christmas morning concert. They were married in New York in 1954, he died in 2002. On July 26, 2006 Miss Lou joined him in the land of the ancestors. She was 86.

The Master storyteller, poet, folklorist and teacher is no longer with us but we reminisce and hold dearly the wonderful contribution she made to Jamaica, the Caribbean, Canada and the world. The Honourable Louise Bennett-Coverley, OM, OJ, MBE, DLitt, shared generously the gift of laughter, proud identity, songs and stories. Her memory was vast and we tapped into it for lived experiences of our history. Miss Lou remembered

...continued on page 7

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**Remember
to mark your
calendars for the
August 19, 2006
Independence Gala
and the
Quarterly
Membership
Meeting
scheduled
for
August 27, 2006**



Inside this issue:

Editorial	3
President's Report	4
Executive Director's Report	6
Profile	
Beverley Anderson-Manley	8
Women's Space	10
Youth Pulse	11
Calendar of Events	12

Editorial

Jamaica is celebrating forty-four years of independence from the former mother country – England! This is no small feat. Why you may ask? If for no other reason, that despite our size and the malaise of problems over the years, Jamaica continues to be one of the few countries worldwide maintaining what can be considered a true democracy.

As a people we have had our fair share of ups and downs; some major ones, some just enough to strengthen us and remind us of our “lickle but tallawahness”! We have weathered a number of fierce hurricanes, high unemployment, crime and threats from those who believe they have a right to tell us how we should live and govern ourselves as a people. However, without fail, we have come through each of these tests stronger for our worries.

As we celebrate our forty-fourth anniversary of Independence we do so with the usual pride that as Jamaicans we are known for. We continue to welcome visitors to our shores with our signature smiles and warm hearts. We continue to fan the flames lit by our forefathers

– Bustamante, The Manley's, Hugh Shearer, The Sangster's and the list could go on and on. We thank them for their commitment to country and to the belief that we were a special people with a special purpose, and as such set the standards for our continued growth despite the challenges.

With Independence came our National Anthem, National Pledge and of course the Black, Green and Gold flag, which can be seen flying wherever in the world flags are flown. That is a testament to our place on the world stage. Our signature Reggae music has gone to every corner of the globe and Brand Jamaica is now rolling full steam ahead. Our incredibly poetic language is the envy the world over. Jamaica is almost middle aged and she is showing her wit, charm and muscles with great charm.

It is without a doubt that much of Jamaica's success since achieving independence can only be attributed to the one and only Dr. The Hon. Louise Simone Bennett-Coverley and her steadfast focus on telling the world that our Language was not “bad English” but

rather, a bona fide language. Affectionately known to all of us and to the world as “Miss Lou”, Jamaica owes a permanent debt of gratitude to Miss Lou for making us who we are. It should come as no surprise that as we celebrate this year's independence, we are also celebrating the life and going home of our beloved Miss Lou. It would seem that she timed her departure just to remind us to celebrate who we are and be sure to continue to make “Jamaica Labrish” a part of who we are with no apologies.

Miss Lou, went on to join Mass Ran and her late husband Eric “Chalk Talk” Coverley on Wednesday, July 26, 2006. Though she will be sadly missed, it has begun to feel like we are indeed just using her familiar refrain, “walk good”, believing that we will see her again on a stage somewhere. In tribute to Miss Lou, the JCA says “Walk Good” and proudly recites one of her many poems in our beloved Jamaica Patois

- *“Independence wid a vengeance! Independence raisin cain!
Jamaica start grow beard, ah hope We chin can stan de strain!.... She hope dem caution worl map Fe stop draw Jamaica small, For de lickle speck can't show We Independantniss at all!... Moresomever, we mus tell map dat We don't like we position Please kindly tek we out ah sea An draw we in de Ocean. No easy-come-by freeniss tings, Nuff labour, some privation. Not much of dis an less of dat An plenty studiration...*

RIP Miss Lou!

JCA

**44th Anniversary
Gala Celebration
Aug. 19, 2006**

Tickets and Info:
JCA office
(416) 746-5772
Tickets: \$70.00



**JAMAICAN
CANADIAN
ASSOCIATION**



Sandra Carnegie-Douglas
JCA President

President's Report — A Message From The President

Greetings to our members, supporters, friends and readers of the "In Focus".

It is summertime, and oh what a summer it has been! Since wrapping up our 2006 Annual General Meeting at the end of May 2006, JCA has been a-buzz with numerous activities both within the membership and our social services programs, thanks to the hard work of our members, staff and my colleagues on the Board.

Let me take this opportunity to welcome the 2006 Board of Directors and to congratulate the new members who were elected to the Board - Norma Brown-Larro as Executive Secretary, Keith Hale as Building Chairperson and Edna Bowes as Fundraising Chairperson. I would also like to congratulate Sylvanus Thompson and LaToya McPherson who were re-elected as Education and Cultural Committee Chairperson and Youth Affairs Chairperson, respectively. Thank you to the members who completed their terms, Desrene Lewis, Leon Sutherland and Richard Banton.

Your new Board has its work cut out as we move

ahead to implement our activities and fulfill the objectives and goals we have set out for the Association.

Since our last issue of In Focus, JCA was selected as a lead agency, in the North Quadrant, for the Youth Opportunity Fund - Youth Outreach Worker Program. This program is part of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Youth Opportunities Strategy Initiative. The aim of this initiative is to hire youth outreach workers across Toronto and in the GTA areas to work with youth and connect them with appropriate services and support.

As you may be aware, the province announced this initiative in the height of the advocacy that the Coalition of African Canadian Community Organizations (The Coalition) undertook in response to the gun violence. The hiring of youth outreach workers was one of the planks in the Coalition's Action Plan for the community.

We recently celebrated the valuable contributions of some of JCA's volunteers. These are some of the individuals who contribute tire-

lessly - with their time, knowledge, effort, funds, etc - to the functioning of the Association. Of course, there are many, many more volunteers who are still to be acknowledged in the coming years! Our sincere gratitude to everyone!

The JCA also participated in the recent Jamaica Diaspora Conference which brought approximately 500 nationals together to dialogue on the important role that Jamaicans in the Diaspora can play as key stakeholders in the development of the Homeland. Its principal aim is to find ways to strengthen and enhance our support for Jamaica more tangibly.

We continue to work actively with other Jamaican organizations to organize various fora and gatherings to promote and support the work and contributions of Jamaicans in the Canadian mosaic. We were part of the community group that organized the farewell tribute to the former High Commissioner, His Excellency Carl Marshall, and we supported the Toronto Transit Commission's/ Jamaica Day Celebration among other activities.



Membership has its privileges: You get to Choose your Board of Directors.

...continued from page 4

President's Report

The JCA was actively involved in the organizing of the African Canadian Community Summit led by the Coalition of African Canadian Organizations (The Coalition) at Ryerson University on July 22nd. The Summit had a turnout of over 250 community people attending and representing the broadest cross-section of the African Canadian community. Key-note speaker Dr. Howard McCurdy, the former Member of Parliament from Windsor, was powerful in his message to the audience which among other points emphasized the importance of the need for the community to fully support mechanisms like the Coalition in order for them to succeed and sustain, not unlike the entrenched support that African Americans have given to the NAACP.

The JCA's hallmark event, *the Annual Independence Gala* is set to take place on **Saturday, August 19, 2006**. This year we will celebrate Jamaica's 44th Independence Anniversary, and JCA's 44th Anniversary as an organization. Our theme for the Gala is

aptly titled, "*Jamaica/JCA - One Love!*" We will be honored by the presence of Ms. Beverley Manley, former first lady of Jamaica, political scientist and Broadcaster as our keynote speaker. This will be an event that you will not want to miss as we are poised this year to take the celebrations to the next level!

On a final note, the news of the passing of Dr. the Honourable Louise Bennett-Coverley, caused a deep sense of loss for Jamaicans, Caribbean peoples and many others around the world. While we grieve her loss, we are comforted by the enormity of who she was, and in many ways - still is and will always be. She personified strength, confidence, pride and.....*rambunctious* laughter - everything that is Jamaican! Nuff Nuff Luv we 'ave fi you, Miss Lou! May your good duppy walk with all of us!

Nuff Respect,

Sandra Carnegie-Douglas

Jamaica & the Jamaican Canadian Association

Celebrate their
44th Independence
Anniversary at a

Gala Celebration

August 19, 2006

JCA Centre
995 Arrow Rd,
Toronto Ontario

Entertainment:
Jay Douglas and The All-star Band

Tickets and Info:
JCA office
(416) 746-5772
Tickets: \$70.00



Keynote speaker:
Ms. Beverley Anderson-Manley.
Former First Lady of Jamaica,
Political Scientist,
Writer, Broadcaster.



Executive Director's Report

August 6th 1962 Jamaica became an independent nation. Today, so many miles away we can almost hear the bells tolling across the Island and still feel the pride that illuminated the faces of Jamaicans everywhere.

As we look back on the history of both Jamaica and the JCA we cannot help but thank those who were before us; those with the vision and the drive to make things happen. I personally thank them for allowing me to be born in a country that has rightfully taken on the task of self-government and I thank the founders of JCA because of you, we are doing what we are most proud of, making a difference.

I met a young woman the other day who told me that when she came to Canada from Jamaica she was told that, "JCA was the place to come as I started my life here". She went on to say, "I was amazed at what you offer and felt encouraged." This is why we continue to do what we do every day; we know that we are in service to our community. It is with the same vitality and pride that we at the JCA provide support services to our community, services that are vital to individuals, families and the overall community.

Program Highlights

The summer months rushed in with a burst of energy as young people took over the centre, youth looking for employment via the **Jobs for Youth program** and the **Summer Career Placement Program** or the 6-12 year olds attending the Leaders of Tomorrow Day Camp. JCA is very pleased to provide leadership, social, recrea-

tional, heritage and academic programming to over 75 youngsters this summer and employment to 15 youths.

We have seen a 40% increase in the number of persons accessing our services when compared to the same time last year. Over 600 men, women and children received services over the quarter through our various programming stream. Overall last year we served 1600 clients for the year. This trend is expected to continue as we broaden our horizon in the areas of programs and services, increase our staffing compliment and continue our work at the grassroots.

Youth Opportunity Fund-Youth Outreach Worker Program

JCA is pleased to be the lead organization for North Toronto in the Ministry of Children and Youth Services Youth Outreach Worker Project. The pilot project is off to a good start as we were able to provide funds to community organizations to hire youth workers and deploy them in 4 communities.

Community consultations were held in Jane/Finch, Westminister/Branson and Lawrence Heights to provide information to community organizations about the funds available, its purpose, to answer questions, invite feedback as well as to request submission of a mini proposal to hire youth workers. A total of 32 organizations participated in the consultation process. Seven submissions were received from Jane/Finch and Lawrence Heights resulting in 3 agencies joining the partnership. Black Action Defense Committee hired a worker to cover the Lawrence

Heights community, Promoting Economic Action and Community Health (PEACH) hired a worker for Jane/Finch, Jane and Finch Family Centre hired a worker for Jane/Finch and JCA will also hire a worker for Jane/Finch.

JCA also seconded Mary Mark, Coordinator of the K-Club program to take on the role as Supervisor for the project. Hincks Dellcrest and the Griffin Centre who were approved as part of the lead agency team will be hiring workers in Westminister/Branson and Flemingdon Park/Victoria Village.

As the lead agency JCA is mandated to recruit key community stakeholders and form a steering committee to support the project. The purpose of the steering committee is to strategically guide the process, and build a model for delivering this program. All agencies receiving a youth worker is required to have a representative on the steering committee and we are inviting other community organizations and stakeholders from the communities to participate at the steering committee level.

United Way

The United Way Campaign will commence on September 10th with the P&G Leaps and Bounds. We would like to have a large group walking under the JCA banner this year. Please contact Karen Tull at 416-746-5772 ext. 242 if you would like to walk with us. **Remember that you can also designate your United Way Pledges from your place of employment to come directly to the Jamaican Canadian Association.**

Finally, congratulations JCA on your 44th anniversary. You are

making history and as our National Hero Marcus Garvey said "History is the land-mark by which we are directed into the true course of life. The History of a movement, the history of a nation, the history of a race is the guide-post of that movement's destiny, that nation's destiny, that race's destiny. What

we do today that is worthwhile inspires others to act at some future time."

Blessings!

Melody Brown

Executive Director

416-746-5772, ext. 226

mbrown@jcassoc.org



Our Treasure

...continued from cover story

coming to Toronto in the late 1970s for "Anancy for All People Week", visiting many schools and receiving many letters from the students. One read, she laughs heartily: "Dear Miss Lou, I am from Jamaica and I was glad to see a Jamaican professor come to my school, an Anancy professor." Her grandmother, Meme, was the bearer of many Anancy stories and Miss Lou remembered many nights falling asleep to the songs of such stories. She thoroughly enjoyed singing folk songs.

This only child of Augustus Cornelius Bennett, a baker, and Kerene Robinson-Bennett, a dressmaker, identified her life's mission at age 13 – valorising the Jamaican Creole, validating the language of Jamaicans. The book, *Utterances and Incantations: Women, Poetry and Dub*, edited by poet Afua Cooper, is dedicated to two Caribbean women who fought to free the Word – Queen Nanny of the Portland Maroons and Miss Lou. In the Introduction, Cooper writes: "Long before dub poetry emerged as an art form, Bennett was one of the first Caribbean/New World artists to use Creole as a literary language. She wrote in Creole and published her poems and books in that language. The literati derided her for doing so, for after all, folk speech, Jamaican Creole, was not a language but a 'bastard tongue'... Today she is hailed as a pioneer, an innovator, a legend. But in the tradition of her ancestresses she is a warner, and a woman gifted with foresight and insight." Dub poet Mutabaruka thanks her for paving the way in his poem, "Miss Lou". Broadcaster and performer Joan Andrea Hutchinson credits her in the poem, "Tenky Miss Lou Tenky" and Canada's leading dub poet, Lillian Allen, lionizes Miss Lou in her poem, "Tribute to Miss Lou". She writes: "She writes/the heartbeat of our lives/dignity/culture/politics/history/lovingness/soul/dis dressup oman wi shining star."

In the *Jamaica Journal*, Vol 24, No 3, February 1993, Professor Rex Nettleford writing about Fifty Years of Pantomime, mentions that "Louise Bennett and Ranny Williams, however commanded choreographers and composers to bend their genius; and there is today a 'Ranny Step' that has survived him as there is a Miss Lou way of putting over a song". They were centerpieces in pantomime. Mervyn Morris, Professor Emeritus at the University of the West Indies writes in *Jamaica Journal* Vol. 27, Nos.2-3 that "there is surely no West Indian author, living or dead, more often credited with having cleared a way".

We thank God for sharing with us Miss Lou, a forerunner, trailblazer, mother, wife, daughter and friend. We salute her independent spirit as we observe Emancipation Day and Independence Day. Our condolences to her family. Walk Good, Miss Lou.

Written by: Neil Armstrong, Editor of the Canada Extra, a publication of the Gleaner Company. Canada Extra will be one of the recipients of the 2006 JCA Community Service Awards.

Beverley Anderson-Manley

Profile

A former First Lady of Jamaica in the 1970's – Beverley Manley served as Jamaica's representative to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and the OAS/CIM. She is a gender and transformational trainer; consultant on Third World development and Communication issues. A Vice President of the Third World Foundation headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, Manley was active in the politics of the People's National Party in the 1970's and early 1980's. She was President of the PNP Women's Movement and Chairperson of the PNP Political Education Programme as well as its Canvassers Training Programme. She was also a member of the Party Executive and National Executive Council – working tirelessly in the interest of women. This was a period when the women's movement in Jamaica was very active resulting in changes in many laws that discriminated against women and children.

She has written numerous papers on Third World political, social and economic issues as



well as articles on communications and transformation. She is well known in Jamaica, the Caribbean and the Third World as an expert on Gender and Development with particular emphasis on Gender Policy issues. Her ongoing research is in the area of Jamaica's modern political development – the basis of which was laid between 1938 and 1944.

She has toured North American University campuses extensively over the last two decades – lecturing students and members of non-governmental organisations. She has also been a Visiting Professor on many of the campuses including North Western University, Harvard University, Cornell University and Governors State University. In addition, in the fall of 1990, Anderson-Manley was the distinguished Carnegie International Fellow at Radcliffe/Harvard, where she carried out extensive research on gender

issues.

In September of 1994, Manley was the guest of the British Government for one week. During this time, Anderson-Manley, toured Universities and broadcasting houses in keeping with her interests – Gender and Communications.

Manley continues to be a sought after speaker locally (in Jamaica); regionally (in the Caribbean) and in North America. In addition, she continues to participate in numerous conferences and research groups focusing on developmental issues. During her tenure as first lady, Anderson-Manley travelled extensively overseas, often leading delegations (both for the Government and the Party). These travels included trips across North America, Scandinavia, Africa, the former Soviet Union and Cuba (to name a few).

Nationally, she worked tirelessly to promote developmental issues, including the rights of women and children and was given a national honour by her country for her leadership in these areas.

(Continued on page 9)

Beverley Anderson-Manley

Profile

In keeping with this, she spearheaded a number of policies and programmes which led to a decrease in the levels of discrimination against women and children. In mid-August, 1995, Manley was guest of UNDP at the launching of the 6th Human Development Report in Oslo, Norway.

She was a panellist on a series of debates sponsored by UNESCO during the fourth international conference on Women in Beijing, China, in September of 1995.

In addition, Manley is co-producer and co-host for a week-day discussion programme on radio in Jamaica – The Breakfast Club. In the thirteen years of its existence – this programme has become a trailblazer for discussing controversial issues, including issues of Gender, politics and economics. It commands an audience that includes the top decision-makers in the country. Manley left the Breakfast Club in March of 2005 in order to pursue her vision of creating opportunities for transformation of the Caribbean Region.

In the late 90's Manley participated in a second Master's Pro-

gramme in Organisational Development at American University in Washington. In March of 2002, Manley participated in a programme at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) on Systems, Systems Thinking, Mental Models and Visioning in organisations as well as a Leadership in Development Seminar at the Kennedy School (Harvard University).

She is also a graduate of Landmark Education Corporation – a transformation Institute that carries out work throughout the world and which has its headquarters in San Francisco. The

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programme operates in 100 cities worldwide.

A spiritual person, Anderson-Manley facilitates workshops in Corporate and Non-Profit organisations. These are workshops in transformation – beginning with transformation of self; transformation of relationships an transformation of life itself. The workshops focus on organisations in transition; Customer

Service, Culture change; Systems and Systems Thinking; Team Building; communication and genuine dialogue.

A sought after Organisation Development Practitioner, Trainer; International Gender Consultant and transformation Speaker, Anderson-Manley has two children – Natasha, a graduate of the University of Edinburgh in Scotland with a Master's Degree in English is an Events Planner and David a graduate of City University of London with a MA. in International Journalism; as well as certification in Computer Studies. Both reside in London.

A Political Scientist, a Political Activist, a Gender and Development Consultant, an Organisational Development Practitioner and Broadcaster, Anderson-Manley's vision is to utilise all the techniques she has acquired to carry out programmes nationally, regionally and internationally that facilitate transformation of individuals, corporations, communities and societies in the Caribbean Region.

Hobbies include reading, acting, cooking, dancing, listening to all types of music and mimicking – living life fully!

Women's Space

The Jamaican Canadian Association's Women's Committee/Jamaican Link

The Women's Committee continues to meet its mandate to form links with other women's groups. One of the groups we have linked with is Beechwood Home Accessories in Jamaica. As illustrated in the following article, our Committee was impressed with the efforts of this group and supported them by buying their products when Joan Grant-Cummings brought them to Toronto in 2003. We hope to continue to give our support in whatever way we can.

Beechwood Home Accessories (BHA) - A Community Enterprise

Beechwood Home Accessories (BHA) is the name of a micro-enterprise being operated by two women from the Lyndhurst/Greenwich community in Kingston, Jamaica. The BHA was established in 2003 as a joint initiative between the Women's Resource and Outreach Center (WROC) - an NGO group based in the Lyndhurst/Greenwich community and two community based groups, Women Working for Progress and Beechwood Senior Citizen's group. Initially, BHA was a sewing project, however the women quickly realised the value of their skill and quality workmanship when persons became interested in buying their products. This effectively changed BHA from a 'sewing project' into the small cottage business it is today.



Agatha Lewis and Linda Crew, members of BHA. - S. Hutchinson/Photographer



Linda Crew a member of BHA showing a place mat made using the Jamaican traditional bandana material. - S. Hutchinson/Photographer

day. The range of products made by the women include such items as; hand towels, drapery, table cloths, blender and toaster covers, pot holders, mosquito nets, dresses, and shirts.

Moving BHA from a sewing project to a micro-enterprise required some assistance. The women received assistance from the Jamaica Business Development Centre (JBDC) to procure sewing machines, additionally, JBDC provided funding that allowed twenty women to be trained in how to operate and manage a small business - this training was conducted by WROC.

Over its 3-year existence BHA, like most small businesses, has experienced good and bad moments. Through participating in craft shows and satisfying customers the work of BHA is being hailed. In fact, the story of these enterprising women has been told in the Jamaican Gleaner and on the television programmes produced by the Jamaica Information Service. There is also the link with the Jamaican Diaspora, including the JCA's Women's Committee and Women's

**"Never doubt
your ability
to influence,
inspire and
impact others
around you"**

Women's Space

Health In Women's Hands who assisted in selling items of BHA during the summer of 2003. Unfortunately however, BHA now only consists of two women who have remained committed. Cheaper imported goods and a need for assistance with marketing are just two of the main issues facing BHA currently. The women however continue to serve their clientele and were recently asked to provide household accessories that were used to decorate a National Housing Trust model house.

The women continue to keep this community enterprise going because it is their life, their passion, and it provides them their independence!



**Approach To Summer
Get up, Get out,
Get Active!**

Youth Pulse

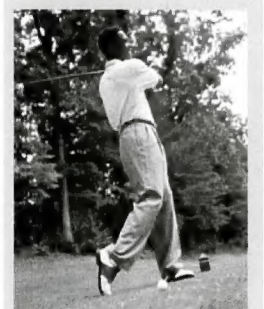
Beloved Miss Lou

For the warmth of your smile
and the beauty of your grace
in the hearts of Jamaicans
You forever hold a place
Thank you for sharing your genius
of wisdom, comedy and wit
through the gift of stories and songs
You so effortlessly knit
You illuminated our rich heritage
From the very start
with expressions of cultural pride
you made patois a work of art
As ambassador of our culture
You have left a lasting impact
For the generations to come
Your legacy will remain intact
We thank you beloved Miss Lou
For your many joys and pleasures
We honor you always
love, cherish and treasure
Written by Natasha Blake



Natasha Blake

**Youth Pulse
is a regular
corner in the
In Focus
written by
Natasha
Blake**



**Annual JCA Golf
Tournament
August 12, 2006**



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JCA

44th Anniversary Gala Celebration



Keynote speaker

*Beverley
Anderson-Manley.*

For details:
see pages 8 & 9

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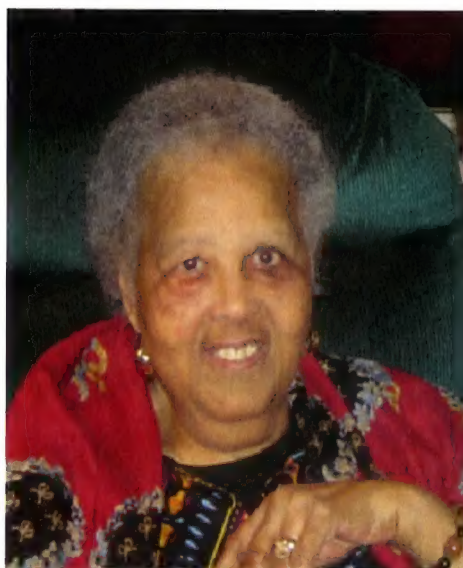
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Letters and Submissions
welcome. The Editorial
Committee reserves the
right to edit materials.

**We must not forget.
We will miss you, Miss Lou.**



Jamaica's Ambassador of Culture

Hon. Louise Bennett-Coverley, OM OJ MBE DLitt

WALK GOOD!

JCA Calendar of Events

Please note: the following event dates were submitted
to the PR Committee by the printing deadline

Independence Gala	Board	August 19, 2006
Quarterly Membership Meeting	Board	August 27, 2006
Scholarship Awards	Education	September 16, 2006
Health Fair	Education / Women's	October 14, 2006
Quarterly Meeting	Board	November 26, 2006
New Year's Eve Gala	Fundraising	December 31, 2006